GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:14
ANSWERED ON:25.07.2005
LINKING OF RIVERS
Zahedi Shri Mahboob

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Bangladesh has opposed the Union Government's proposal to link the rivers;

(b) if so, whether they contend that the linking of rivers may lead to the complete flow of water to India only; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to resolve the issue with Bangladesh?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI)

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 14 TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.7.2005 IN LOK SABHA REGARDING LINKING OF RIVERS

(a) Government of Bangladesh has expressed apprehension at the proposal of linking rivers in bilateral meetings. The issue was discussed in the 35th meeting of the Joint Rivers Commission held in New Delhi in September, 2003. Similarly, the Bangladesh Prime Minister raised this issue during a bilateral meeting with our Prime Minister on the margins of Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Co-operation (BIMST-EC) summit in May, 2004. It was raised also during the Foreign Office Consultations in June, 2005.

(b)& (c) Bangladesh feels that the inter-linking project would deprive them of sufficient water for their needs. The Government of India has assured the Bangladesh side that the project was at the conceptual stage. UPA Government gave emphasis in National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) for peninsular zone only and therefore apprehension in any International border including Bangladesh is not relevant at this stage. The Government of India has also stated that it would not take any unilateral action, which would harm the interest of Bangladesh. This was reflected in the Joint Press Statement issued after the conclusion of the Consultations.